

FARM LIFE IN JAPAN...II

Festival of the Fox—Japanese Will o' the Wisp—The Enchanted Lover and Disenchanted Husband—Waylays, Chapels—The Farmer's Daily Life—Climatology—Earthquakes and Typhoons—Sowing and Reaping—Severity of the Soil—Simplicity of Life—Female Laborers—Young Nippon at Home and at School.

From Our Special Correspondent.

KANAGAWA, May 10, 1864.

On the 5th day of the 2d moon, corresponding this year to our March 12, is the festival of Inari, the patron deity of the farmer, who, according to Japanese mythology, descended from heaven in pre-historic ages, came to earth and taught the people the use and cultivation of rice. The white fox is his chief minister, sharing propitiatory honors with his master. The fox is one of the sacred emblems of the Japanese, disputing precedence with the tortoise, stork, and lotus flower. There are good and bad foxes; the white fox is good, the others are doubtful reputation. In their legends of the foxes we find repeated in more romantic form the old superstition of the Will o' the Wisp. The benighted traveler sees a light which, as he follows, recedes till he is led into a hopeless wilderness—it is only the wicked fox whose breath is illuminated like a flame, and lures him on to destruction.

A youth wandering afield encounters a beautiful and fascinating maiden with whose charms his heart is taken captive—he follows after her, she coyly retreating and growing each moment more fascinating and beautiful, till the youth, like the benighted traveler, finds that he is lost in wood or fern, while his lovely enchantress, returning her true fox shape, disappears; or the fox spirit living in the maiden, and, like Undine, trying to recover its lost soul, allows the youth to win the charms that have enchanted him, and, overflowing with joy, he bears his beautiful bride home, lives happily with her in peace, his children growing around the door, till some day he is disenchanted of his spell by beholding beautiful wife and playful children converted into foxes before his eyes and running away—happy youth if the wicked enchantress has not first rent him in pieces. So, to say of a Japanese girl that she is as fascinating as the fox maiden is to pay the highest tribute to the power and danger of her charms.

The traveler in Japan, wherever he may go, will be held by the wayside and in the fields little chapels like exaggerated dog kennels, most of them dusty and dilapidated, open to wind and weather. Not only here, but more especially in the covert of every grove and on every leafy eminence, literally "on every high hill and under every green tree," are they found. A white paper tied to a reed stalk, a straw sandal suspended from the roof, a little rice, grain, or salt sprinkled about, or other similar emblem shows, however, that these are not wholly neglected. These chapels, of which a dozen or more may be seen during a brief walk, are sacred to Inari and his white foxes. Some of these chapels are built over fox holes on the hill side, a door is left for ingress and egress, and within are placed trays of food and gifts for the fox. On this 5th day of the 2d moon there is no chapel, shrine or kennel, however built, broken down, or begrimed with the dust of a twelve month, but is decked with ornaments, and with the simple offerings of the neighboring pensantry. There are flags inscribed with words and symbols of propitiation, streamers of white paper, flowers, green twigs, libations of rice wine, offerings of rice, and sandals of horses and men. They and the paths accompanying them are also hung with paper lanterns, which at night being lighted, are as so many foxes themselves and the woods and fields breathing flames from their nostrils as in the fabric.

dig for it, he has his lucky and unlucky days for birth, labor, and marriage, and we have good ships that never sail to sea on Fridays, and good farmers who care not for the work of the moon. And if a three colored tortoise will preserve a ship from foundering on Japan coasts if luckily abroad, it is no more wonderful than that infant's caud which brings all manner of prosperity to its fortunate owner.

The tools of the Japanese farmer are few and simple. He listens with incredulous amazement to stories of steam plows, mowing machines and horse rakes. For hoe and spade he has the mattock; the rake or harrow slightly curved, and set into a handle at a right-angle, serves to cut his grain and to cut reeds, grasses and twigs. The gathered grain is beaten out on the field with a flail, or hatched. A winnowing mill, counterbalanced of those seen in every old New-England farm yard, and which has, like the old well-sweep and the two buckets over a wheel, been an institution in Japan for unknown centuries, completes the farmer's tool chest. Stout arms and a patient will supply all the rest.

The soil looks rich, but is very poor. You walk anywhere among the cultivated fields, you plunge your walking stick with ease three feet into the yielding earth, and while admiring its rich black color are reminded of fertile prairie soils at home, but the resemblance is only in appearance. The moment you leave the neighborhood of towns and villages or the line of the coast, where manure can be had, the crop shows from what a lean breast, though dark as Africa's soil, they draw their sustenance. I have seen the soil about Nagasaki, Hinkaido, Yedo and Kamagawa, and it is all the same; yielding bounteously returns only to plowing labor. And this labor the Japanese peasant faithfully bestows till all the country laughs with fatness. For him there are no ambitions beyond honest toil, the conditions of life are fixed irrevocably, he is haunted by no dreams of power, pursued by no restless avarice, and as his human machine runs on gently without many frets or breaks. His wife is industrious like himself, her spinning wheel sings by the door, and the shuttle of his daughter's loom flies by the window. In the rice culture and the cotton picking they labor by his side. His children, who are as numerous about his door as the sheaves in his field, have full run of the streets for their earlier years—dirty and wholesome, as free grown humans are wont to be—the girl plays with dolls and dresses the boy snarcs birds, robins with nests and dresses up the little rills, sails his toy boat, bakes his mud pie in the sun, and tears his trowsers, if he has any, as all good farmers' boys have an indefatigable right to do—till such time as he is able to go to the woods for fuel, or to the fields to hoe and weed. But one thing is to be remembered, to school he must go, and the sun is hardly up before he is off to school with shining brown face and the roll of paper which makes his copy book in hand, where he learns to read and write and make faces at his master (a regular Ichabod Crane in book spectacles), and his task is over and he on his way home with ink besmirched face, at an hour when our boys at home have scarcely begun their lessons for the day. It was a group of such boys full of a school boy's love for fun whom I once addressed at the door of their school room around which they had gathered at sight of a strange face: "Tell me, my fine fellow," said I to one in the best Japanese I could muster, "tell me how old you are?" There was a pause in their roguish faces, when one whispers over the others shoulder, "tell him you are a hundred."

ASHES—The market is still very quiet and prices are entirely nominal.

COTTON.—The market is at a complete standstill under the influence of the non-use of the cargo of large quantities of cotton recently arrived and nominally about \$15 per Middlings. There is considerable doubt expressed by well-informed merchants that the number of bales captured at Savannah is not so large as has been reported, they taking the ground that the leaders of the rebellion have strenuously forbade the concentration at any one point, particularly on the seaboard, of anything like the amount given on Monday morning. On the other hand, it is stated that the quantity may not be exaggerated and is likely to be even larger.

THE PARK BANK, BANK OF THE REPUBLIC, BROOKLYN BANK AND MERCANTILE BANK HAVE TAKEN MEASURES FOR SECURING THE CONSENT OF THEIR STOCKHOLDERS TO THE TRANSFER OF THEIR ASSETS TO THE NATIONAL SYSTEM. THESE WITH THE BANK OF COMMERCE, MAKE FIVE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE BANKS LIKELY TO PASS INTO NATIONAL BANKS.

EXCHANGE.—The market is doing full price are obtained; we note sales of 1,900 bags prime Rio at \$20; gold, 4 mos., and 250 bags bags 1,900 at 200, gold, cash. The stock in the country as made up by Wm. Scott & Son are 33,134 bags, including 46,332 bags here; 1,000 do., in Philadelphia; and 3,800 do., in Baltimore.

COPPER.—AMERICAN INgot is quiet, but prices are without much change. We note sales of 30,000 lbs. a day at \$20.50 per cwt. at Baltimore; New Smelting and Young are steady and firm at \$20.50 for the former, and \$20.40 for the latter.

FLOUR AND MEAL.—The market for Western and State Flour is less active, and under the decline in gold and exchange, prices are lower. At lower with few sellers at the decline. Trade and Family brands are still unchanged; the sales are 4,800 bags a day at \$20.50-\$20.75 per cwt. at New York.

IRON.—THE SUPPLY OF DRY COAL CONTINUES, CONSEQUENTLY PRICES ARE QUITE STABLE. THE BUSINESS IS NOT SO ACTIVE AS IT WAS LAST WEEK.

MACKEREL.—MEET WITH A FAIR INQUISITION OF FULL PRICES, AND AT 7 PER CENT INTEREST REQUIRE \$335,000.

CH. & AL. 1st Mort. 100, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 997, 998, 999, 999, 1000, 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 1005, 1006, 1007, 1008, 1009, 1009, 1010, 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1016, 1017, 1018, 1019, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022, 1023, 1024, 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028, 1029, 1029, 1030, 1